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## HINTS ON READING.

“I no sooner come into the Library, but I bolt the door to me, excluding Lust, Ambition, Avarice, and all such vices, whose nurse is Idleness, the mother of Ignorance and Melancholy. In the very lap of eternity, among so many divine souls, I take my seat with so lofty a spirit, and sweet content, that I pity all that know not this happiness.”

[HEINSIUS, of Leyden, in D'Israeli's *Curiosities of Literature*.]

“Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider.”

[BACON'S *Essays—On Studies*. Harpers' ed. p. 179.]

### 1. DEFINITION OF READING.

Reading, in its true sense and use, is *study*—sometimes a laborious, sometimes an entertaining perusal of books—but always *the study of books*.—“Reading,” says Dr. Watts, “is that *means or method of knowledge*, whereby we acquaint ourselves with what other men have published to the world, in their writings.”—*Watts on the Improvement of the Mind*, p. 38.

### 2. OBJECTS OF READING.

“The question recurs, What is the proper object of Reading? what the end to be kept in view, in the choice and perusal of books? One great end, doubtless, is *Knowledge*. . . . One object of reading, then, is to acquire knowledge. But we must bear in mind that knowledge, in itself, is not so much an end as a means, and that we are always to keep in view its ulterior uses and applications. . . . Knowledge brings with it *duties* which are not to be neglected. It is a *talent or trust*; and to enable us to employ it aright, we should understand well the end for which God has given us capacities for acquiring it. On no subject are men more likely to err; and how grievous the error is, and in what ways it manifests itself, let Lord Bacon teach. ‘But the greatest error,’ says that great writer, ‘of all the rest, is the mistaking or misplacing of the last or farthest end of knowledge; for men have entered into a desire of learning and knowledge, sometimes upon, &c., . . . seldom sincerely to give a true account of their gift of reason to the benefit and use of men, as if there were sought in knowledge a couch, &c., &c., and not *a rich store-house for the glory of the Creator and the relief of man's estate*.’ Such, then, is the use of knowledge. It constitutes a rich store-house, whence we should draw materials for glorifying God, and improving man's estate. In other words knowledge is to be employed by us in doing good. . . . This remark leads us to notice another of the benefits to be derived from books, when judiciously selected and properly read. This is *the improvement of our intellectual powers and moral sentiments*. . . . So, again, *in regard to taste*. . . . What is true of intellect and taste, is not less true of our *moral sentiments*. . . . (Recapitulation.) *Why should we read?* Partly to procure immediate gratification, but principally,—1st, to acquire knowledge, both for its own sake, and for its uses: 2ndly, to improve the intellectual powers: 3dly, to refine taste: and 4thly, to strengthen the moral and religious sentiments.”—*Professor Alonzo Potter, D. D. Advantages of Science, Harpers' Ed.*, pp. 14, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 31.

“In all our studies and pursuits of knowledge, let us remember that virtue and vice, sin and holiness, and the conformation of our hearts and lives to the duties of true religion and morality, are things of far more consequence than all the furniture of our understandings, and the richest treasures of mere speculative knowledge.”—*Watts on the Mind*, p. 69.

### 3. GENERAL ADVANTAGES OF READING.

“These arts of reading and writing are of infinite advantage ; for by them we are made partakers of the sentiments, observations, reasonings and improvements of all the learned world, in the most remote nations, and in former ages, almost from the beginning of mankind. . . . . The advantages (of reading) are such as these: 1. By reading, we acquaint ourselves, in a very extensive manner, with the affairs, actions, and thoughts of the living and the dead, in the most remote nations, and in most distant ages ; and that with as much ease, as though they lived in our own age and nation. By reading we may learn something from all parts of mankind. . . . . 2. By reading, we learn not only the actions and the sentiments of distant nations and ages, but we transfer to ourselves the knowledge and improvements of the most learned men, the wisest and the best of mankind, when or wheresoever they lived. For though many books have been written by weak and injudicious persons, yet the most of those books, which have obtained great reputation in the world, are the products of great and wise men in their several ages and nations. . . . 3. When we read good authors, we learn the *best* sentiments, even of those wise and learned men. For they studied hard, and committed to writing their maturest thoughts, and the result of their long study and experience. . . . 4. It is another advantage of reading that we may review what we read, we may consult the page again and again, and meditate on it, at successive seasons, in our serenest and retired hours, having the book always at hand.”—*Watts*, pp. 38, 41, 42.

“Written records constitute the only authentic memorials of the past ; and, since those records have been multiplied by printing, and spread over the world, they are truly imperishable. Nor only so ; they are now the property of the whole race. . . . . Now almost all minds experience their enlightening and quickening influence. There is hardly an individual whose knowledge is not enlarged by the use of books ; while, at the same time, multitudes are incited by them to add, by their own labors and discoveries, to the great sum of human attainments. Another advantage of the knowledge gained from books is, that . . . . it is much of it arranged and systematized. Thus we are enabled to see the dependence and connection of different truths ; and, what is more important, we learn to study *principles and laws*, instead of losing ourselves amid a multitude of incongruous facts. . . . How important, then, that every one, who would cultivate in his own mind the true spirit of investigation, or who would acquire that power which results from knowledge, how important that he should become familiar *with such books* as illustrate the nature, and embody the fruits of this system of inquiry.”—*Potter : Advantages of Science*, pp. 16, 17.

### 4. IMPORTANCE OF READING, TO THE BUSINESS MAN, THE MECHANIC AND THE MANUFACTURER.

“Let me invite your attention to the consideration of the probable beneficial effect of the diffusion of scientific knowledge, among those practically and habitually employed in the mechanic and manufacturing arts, and it is likely to operate upon the improvement and advancement of the arts and sciences themselves. . . . . Perhaps there is no better definition of science, than that it is knowledge acquired by the thoughts and the experience of many, and so

methodically arranged, as to be comprehended by any one. . . . The theory of science, then, is the exposition of known facts, arranged in classes, and expressed in words. . . . The advantages of experience and observation on a large scale, are by no means peculiar to mechanical ingenuity. . . . It is peculiarly true with regard to the chemistry of the arts. . . . In fact, the very foundation of modern chemistry, or, at least, of that branch of it termed pneumatic chemistry, was laid in a brewery. There had been no lack of ingenuity, no sparing of labor or expense, no flagging of zeal or curiosity among the old chemists. But the larger and more striking field of observation and combination afforded to Dr. Priestley, by the vats and gases of his neighbor, the brewer, opened a new world to inquiry. From the thick vapors of the brew-house, like one of the gigantic genii of oriental romance, arose that mighty science which has given to enlightened art a more than magical sway. . . . It is wonderful how the elements of the most precious knowledge are spread around us; how to the curious and instructed observer every thing is full and rich with the means of benefiting the human race. The slightest accession to our knowledge of nature, or our command over it, is sure, ultimately, to connect itself with some other truth, or to unfold its own powers or relations, and thus to lead on to some practical benefit, which the boldest conjecture could never have anticipated. The ignorant and the idle, suffer all such opportunities to pass by them as the vagrant breeze. But such will surely not be the case with industrious men, prepared by general science to turn those occasions to the best account. . . . I argue from experience. . . . Take, for instance, the history of one of the most recent and precious gifts which chemistry has made to medicine. A few years ago, a soap manufacturer of Paris, M. Courtois, remarked that the residuum of his lye, when exhausted of the alkali, produced a corrosion of his copper boilers, which struck him as deserving special inquiry. 'He put it,' says Mr. Herschel, 'into the hands of a scientific chemist for analysis, and the result was, the discovery of one of the most singular and important chemical elements, *iodine*. . . . Curiosity was excited; the origin of the new substance was traced to the sea-plants, from whose ashes the principal ingredient of soap is obtained, and ultimately to the sea-water itself. It was thence hunted through nature, discovered in salt mines and springs, and pursued into all bodies which have a marine origin; *among the rest into sponge*. A medical practitioner, (Dr. Coindet, a Swiss physician,) then called to mind a reputed remedy for the cure of one of the most grievous and unsightly disorders to which the human species is subject—the *goitre*. . . . and which was said to have been originally cured by the ashes of burned sponge. Led by this indication, he tried the effect of iodine on that complaint, and the result established the extraordinary fact, that this substance, taken as a medicine, acts with the utmost promptitude and energy on goitre, dissipating the largest and most inveterate in a short time, and acting (of course with occasional failures, like all other medicines,) as a specific or natural antagonist against that odious deformity.' Now consider what a map of human misery, for a long series of generations to come, has been relieved or removed by this discovery, arising from *the single circumstance of a Parisian soap manufacturer being an observing man, who understood the uses and nature of chemical analysis*. . . . Let us cross the channel to Great Britain, for some farther examples. . . . *The Telescope*, in its earliest stages of invention had received all the improvement that could then be furnished by the genius of the great Galileo, the father of modern science, and by the superhuman philosophical sagacity of Sir Isaac Newton, as well as of their disciples and followers, the most learned and ingenious men of Europe, such as the English Hooke, the Dutch Huygens, and the German Euler.—The product of these labors was admirable proof of the power of human invention; yet it was accompanied *with imperfections, especially in the refracting telescope*, that seemed insuperable. . . . The removal of this defect was reserved for *John Dollond*, originally a silk weaver, and afterward an optician and instrument-maker, of London. Half a century after Newton's exper-

ments, Dollond conceived the idea, that the refractive powers of different kinds of glass might be made to correct each other. In this he completely succeeded. Had he not *been familiar with the science* of Newton, Dollond would never have attempted this discovery; had he not also been a *practical mechanic*, it is hardly probable that he would have succeeded. The incidental mention of the ultimate advantages derived by the art of navigation from the labors of Dollond, suggests to my mind another illustration, and recalls the name of *John Smeaton*. He was by regular trade, a philosophical instrument-maker, but his active mind had taken a broad range of rational curiosity and employment, embracing almost every thing in science or art, that could throw light on mechanical contrivance. His inventions of this sort were very numerous and ingenious, but his solid fame rests chiefly upon the erection of the Eddystone lighthouse. . . . . There are few narratives of more intense interest or varied instruction than his own account of this great work. . . . . The names and lives of our own distinguished benefactors of mankind—Franklin, and Rittenhouse, and Whitney, and Fulton, and Perkins—press upon my memory. . . . . The history of Printing offers another tempting field of collateral illustration. . . . . I might tell of the Italian Aldus and his sons, of Henry Stephens, of Paris, and his learned family, of the Dutch Elgivirs, the English Bouyer, the Scotch Foulis and Duncan, and surely could not forget the noblest name of them all, our own Franklin. . . . . I must also reluctantly refrain from detailing the studies, inventions and improvements of the potter, *Josiah Wedgewood*. . . . . But from among the names which thus crowd upon me, let me adduce one more bright example. . . . . It was about this season of the year, just seventy years ago, that the instrument-maker employed by the University of Glasgow, received from the professor of natural philosophy in that ancient seminary of learning, a broken model of the steam-engine, as then used, to be put in order for his lectures. . . . . An ordinary workman, after admiring the ingenuity of this imperfect machine, would have made the necessary repairs, sent it back to the lecture-room, and the world would have gone on as usual. But it had fallen into the hands of *James Watt*, a young mechanic, of singular and various inventive sagacity, and of most patient and persevering ingenuity, who, *in addition to much miscellaneous information, and some mathematical acquirement, had been led by a liberal curiosity to master all that was then known of chemistry, and theoretical natural philosophy in its broadest sense*. . . . . Look around for yourselves—on our rivers and lakes—on the manufactures of Europe and America, piled up in our shops—on the railroads which traverse, or are just about to traverse, our continent—on the wealth, the power, the rapid interchange of commerce and intelligence produced by the modern steam-engine, and then let me remind you, that all this is the fruit of the solitary labors and studies of a Glasgow work-shop; directed by an active, vigorous, daring, but most patient and persevering *mind, which knew how to use well the knowledge that other wise or ingenious men had previously reasoned out or discovered*. . . . . I have not yet touched upon the influence of knowledge, upon the operative and producing classes themselves, in improving the character, raising the thoughts, awakening sleeping talent, and thus qualifying this great and valuable body, for the able, just, right, wise and honorable discharge of all the duties of men, of citizens, of freemen, of patriots. This is alone, and in itself, a theme full of interest—full of excitement. . . Such were Saratoga's victors, such the brave men whose blood earned our liberties. Foremost among them was *the blacksmith* of Rhode Island, *Nathaniel Greene*; he whom Hamilton, while he honored Washington as 'the first *man* of the country,' did not hesitate to style 'the first *soldier* of the Revolution. . . . . There also was the *book-binder*, *Knox*, and from among *the mechanics* of New York, came forth our *Willet*, 'the bravest of the brave.' . . . . Abroad, our interests were watched over, and our national dignity represented, by the *printer*, *Franklin*. . . . . Foremost in our councils at home, and enrolled among the immortal names of the committee of five, who prepared and reported the Declaration of Independence, was



the *shoemaker, Roger Sherman*, a man self-educated and self-raised. . . . . Here were other names like these which I cannot now pause to recapitulate. . . . . Still I cannot forbear from paying a passing tribute to the memory of a townsman and a friend. . . . . The courage, seamanship, and ability of *Commodore Chauncey*, would have been exerted in vain, had they not been seconded by the skill, the enterprise, the science, the power of combination, and the ready and inexhaustible resources of his *ship-builder, Henry Eckford*. . . . . The ardor for improvement, the thirst for knowledge, manifested by the mechanics of this and others of our cities, are gratifying indeed. . . . . But they derive a tenfold interest and value from the greater results which they foretell, and the more glorious future they appear to usher in." *Gulian C. Verplanck's Discourse before the Mechanics' Institute of New York, Nov. 27, 1833—passim.*

### 5. CHOICE OF BOOKS.

"The world is full of books ; but there are multitudes which are so ill-written, that they were never worthy any man's reading ; and there are thousands more which may be good in their kind, but are worth nothing, when the month, or year, or occasion is past, for which they were written. Others may be valuable in themselves for some special purpose, or in some peculiar science, but are not fit to be perused by any but those who are engaged in that particular science or business. . . . . It is of vast advantage or improvement of knowledge and saving time, for a young man to have the most proper books for his reading recommended by a judicious friend. . . . . There is yet another sort of books, (in addition to *books of science and complete treatises* on subjects, which are first recommended,) of which it is proper I should say something while I am treating on this subject ; and these are *history, poesy, travels, books of diversion or amusement* ; among which we may reckon also, little common *pamphlets, newspapers, or such like*. For many of these, I confess, *once reading may be sufficient*, where there is a tolerably good memory. . . . . Still let it be remembered, that where the historical narrative is of considerable moment, where the poesy, oratory, &c., shine with some degrees of perfection and glory, a single reading is neither sufficient to satisfy a mind, that has a true taste for this sort of writing ; nor can we make the fullest and best improvement of them, without proper reviews, and that in our retirement as well as in company. . . . . Among these writings of the latter kind, we may justly reckon *short miscellaneous essays* on all manner of subjects ; such as the *Occasional Papers, the Tattlers, the Spectators*, and some other books, that have been compiled out of the weekly or daily products of the press. . . . . Among other books, which are proper and requisite, in order to improve our knowledge in general, or our acquaintance with any particular science, it is necessary that we should be furnished with *vocabularies and dictionaries of several sorts*, namely, of *common words, idioms, and phrases*, in order to explain their sense ; of *technical words, or the terms of art*, to show their use in arts and sciences ; of *names of men, countries, towns, rivers, &c.*, which are called *historical and geographical dictionaries, &c.* *These are to be consulted and used upon every occasion.* . . . . . If such books are not at hand, you must supply the want of them, as well as you can, by consulting such as can inform you." *Watts on the Mind*, pp. 59, 69, 71, 72.

"A wise and good man was accustomed, in his devotion, to thank God for books. He did well ; *good books, rightly used*, are among our greatest blessings. . . . . Books introduce us to the noblest minds of our race, and permit us to commune intimately with them, even at those privileged hours, when they obtain their brightest visions of truth, and pour forth their loftiest or most touching eloquence. It must be remembered, however, that *all books are not good books*, and that *even good books may be so read, as to fail of their appropriate ends*. Milton has said, that 'a wise man can sooner gather gold out of

the drossiest volume, than a fool, wisdom out of Scripture.' It is certain that the effect of reading depends nearly as much on the disposition and taste of the reader, as on the character of the writer. Hence the great importance of considering not only *what* we read, but also in what *way*, and for what *ends*. . . . . A love of books can be acquired only by those who find pleasure in using them ; and hence, whoever would cultivate in himself or others this most desirable taste, *should select, especially at first*, such works as can be read with sustained and quickened attention. But let it not be forgotten, that *such* books, if read *only to amuse* and entertain, must, if *good*, fail of much of their effect, while, if *bad*, their influence will be *deplorable*. . . . . By degrading them into instruments of momentary pleasure, we shall lose sight of their true worth, and learn to confound them with that herd of books, usually known as 'light reading ;' books which seem to have been written in order to be *once read*, and then *forever forgotten*. Soon, too, we shall disrelish all books than contain any serious matter, and be content only with those of the most frivolous and exciting kind. These last will claim every hour that can be allotted to *reading* ; and happy shall we be, if they do not *steal hours that ought to have been given to study*. . . . . To this danger we are peculiarly exposed in our own day. . . . . We should choose books that will exercise the faculty of close and continuous *attention*, and as we advance, we should subject it to the necessity of more strenuous and protracted effort. They should be books, too, which require us to *think* ; which sometimes incline us to close our volume, that we may review the arguments and statements of the writer, and test them by the rules of sound reasoning ; books, which call us to analyze what is complicated, to arrest what is fugitive, and trace out what is subtle ; which suggest new subjects for reflection and inquiry, and gradually lead us to appreciate and enjoy the pleasure that results from the mere exercise of our intellectual powers. . . . . So, again, in regard to *taste*. All men have been endowed, though in different degrees, with a relish for what is beautiful or perfect of its kind. . . . . Hence, books, as well as companions, should be *selected with reference to the cultivation*, not only of the understanding, but also of the taste. And in this respect we are exposed to much danger. Not a few of the works of our day (especially those of a fictitious and periodical character—works, too, which command enthusiastic applause,) are directly calculated to encourage a false taste in literature, as well as a vicious tone in manners and morals. . . . . What is true of intellect and taste is not less true of our *moral sentiments*. . . . . And, as our moral judgments, moreover, are insensibly but powerfully affected by companions, so are they by books—companions, against whom we are apt to be least on our guard, whose instructions we are disposed to receive with a too implicit faith, and whose society we enjoy at those seasons of relaxation, when the heart is most open to influence. It is nearly an axiom, that people will not be better than the books they read. . . . . It is important that all books be proscribed, which inculcate indifference to moral distinctions ; which tend, however indirectly, or insidiously, to excite our evil passions ; which exhibit the guilty and profligate as objects of sympathy and admiration ; or which serve to lessen, in the least, our reverence for principle, or our hatred of a mean and time-serving policy. . . . . In thus explaining the objects which ought to be kept in view in reading, I have, in effect, furnished rules for judging of books, of their character and value. If *one great end of reading* be to enlarge our knowledge, then we should, for the most part, read no books which do not *furnish useful information*. I say, *for the most part*, because we *sometimes* read rather to improve taste, quicken and cultivate imagination, or discipline reason, rather than to gain knowledge. Hence *another rule*, by which we may try a book, is *the effect it has upon the understanding*. Does it require thought, and excite to reflection ? Does it deal in *sound reasoning* only, avoiding all specious fallacies, and making no appeals to mere prejudice or passion ? Does it cultivate in our minds a disinterested *love of truth* ? . . . . . If, on the other hand, it be a *work of imagination or taste*, it should be tried by *its influence on the sensitive part of our nature*. If it pre-

sent us with images of beauty and simplicity, enable us to view the works of nature and art, with a keener and more discriminating relish, inspire us with a love for the perfect, and, above all, if it strengthen and animate our noble sentiments of virtue, it merits frequent and careful perusal. But, *if otherwise*, &c., I need not add, that it is a book to be reprobated and avoided. . . . .

WHAT SHOULD WE READ? Only good books; which Milton describes as 'the precious life-blood of master-spirits, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life.' To know whether a book be good, consider, 1st, whether it adds to our sum of knowledge: 2ndly, whether it induces thought, and exercises reason: 3dly, whether it improves taste: and 4thly, whether it strengthens conscience.—*Dr. Potter: Advantages of Science*, pp. 9—12, 22—27, 31.

"Read *always the best and most recent book on the subject which you wish to investigate*. 'You are to remember,' says Pliny the younger, 'that the most approved authors of each sort are to be carefully chosen, for, as it has been well observed, though we should *read much*, we should not *read many authors*.'"—*Dr. Potter: Handbook for Readers*, p. 18.

## 6. SYSTEMATIC READING; OR READING IN COURSES, OR BY SUBJECTS.

"Some prejudice, against what are called courses of study, has been justly provoked by the great number and variety of those which have been proposed from time to time. . . . . At the outset, *almost any course of reading* is better than the desultory and irregular habits which prevail so extensively. When once the student has acquired a taste for good books, and some just ideas of the object and uses of reading, he may be safely left to glean for himself, from the counsels of others, such hints and directions as are best adapted to his own case. . . . . Do not become so far enslaved by any system or course of study, as to think it may not be altered, when alteration would contribute to the healthy and improving action of the mind. . . . . Beware, on the other hand, of *frequent changes* in your *plan* of study. This is the besetting sin of young persons. 'No, take your course wisely, but firmly,' says Wirt, 'and having taken it, hold upon it with heroic resolution, and the Alps and Pyrenees will sink before you. The whole empire of learning will be at your feet, while those who set out with you, *but stopped to change their plans*, are yet employed in the very profitable business of changing their plans. Let your motto be, *Perseverando vinces*, (*by perseverance thou shalt conquer*.) Practice upon it, and you will be convinced of its value, by the distinguished eminence to which it will conduct you.' . . . . Study *subjects*, rather than books; therefore, compare *different authors* on the *same subjects*; the *statements* of authors, with information collected from *other sources*; and the conclusions drawn by a writer with the rules of sound logic. 'Learning,' says Feltham, 'falls far short of wisdom; nay, so far that you scarcely find a greater fool than is sometimes a mere scholar.' . . . ., 'I take care,' says one of the profoundest and most versatile scholars in England, as quoted by Mr. Warren, in his *Law Studies*, 'always to ascertain the value of what I look at, and if satisfied on that score, I most carefully stow it away. I pay, besides, frequent visits to my 'magazine,' and keep an inventory of at least every thing important, which I frequently compare with my stores. It is, however, the *systematic disposition and arrangement* I adopt, which lightens the labors of memory. I was by no means remarkable for memory, when young; on the contrary, I was considered rather defective on that score.' . . . . *Dare to be ignorant of many things*. 'In a celebrated satire, (*the Pursuits of Literature*) much read in my youth,' says Dr. Quincy, 'and which I myself read about twenty-five years ago, I remember one counsel there addressed to young men, but, in fact, of universal application. I call upon *them*, said the author, to *dare* to be ignorant of many things; a wise counsel and justly expressed. . . . . A good scheme of study will soon show itself to be such by this one test, that it will exclude as powerfully as it will appropriate; it will be a *system* of repulsion no less than of attrac-

tion; once thoroughly possessed and occupied by the deep and genial pleasures of one truly intellectual pursuit, you will be easy and indifferent to all others that had previously teased you with transient excitement.”—*Dr. Potter: Handbook for Readers*, pp. 15—18, 20, 21.

“In learning any new thing, there should be as little as possible first proposed to the mind at once. That being understood, and *fully mastered*, proceed to the *next* adjoining part, yet unknown. This is a slow, but safe and sure way to arrive at knowledge. The mind will be able, in this manner, to cope with great difficulties, and prevail over them, with amazing and happy success. . . . Engage not the mind in the intense pursuit of too many things at once; especially, such as have no relation to one another. This will be ready to distract the understanding, and hinder it from attaining *perfection in any one subject of study*. . . . In the pursuit of every valuable subject of knowledge, keep the end always in your eye, and be not diverted from it by every petty trifle you meet with in the way. . . . Be not satisfied with a mere knowledge of the best *authors*, that treat of any subject, instead of acquainting yourselves *thoroughly with the subject itself*.”—*Dr. Watts on the Mind*, pp. 131—133, 72.

### 7. READING CONJOINED WITH THINKING.

“Deal freely with every author you read; and yield up your assent only to evidence and just reasoning on the subject. . . . In the compositions of men, remember, you are a man as well as they; and it is not their reason, but your own, that is given to guide you, when you arrive at years of discretion. . . . Enter into the sense and argument of the authors you read; examine all their proofs, and then judge of the truth or falsehood of their opinion. . . . You will acquire by degrees a habit of judging justly, and of reasoning well, in imitation of the good writer, whose works you peruse. . . . Never apply yourself to read any human author, with a determination beforehand either for or against him; nor with a settled resolution to believe or disbelieve, to confirm or to oppose whatever he says; but always read with design to lay your mind open to truth, and to embrace it, as well as to reject every falsehood, though it appears under ever so fair a disguise. . . . Never *let an unknown word pass in your reading*, without seeking for its meaning. . . . And, indeed, how many volumes soever of learning a man possesses, he is still deplorably poor in his understanding, till *he has made these several parts of learning his own property*, by reasoning, by judging for himself, and remembering what he has read.—*Dr. Watts on the Mind*, pp. 61, 62, 66, 67, 72, 73.

“Says Locke, ‘Reading furnishes the mind only with *materials* of knowledge; it is *thinking* that makes what we read *ours*.’ . . . Says Dugald Stewart, ‘nothing, in truth, has such a tendency *to weaken*, not only the powers of invention, but the intellectual powers in general, as a habit of *extensive and various reading without reflection*.’ . . . Accustom yourself to refer whatever you read to the general head to which it belongs, and trace it, *if a fact*, to the *principle* it involves or illustrates; *if a principle*, to the *facts* which it produces or explains.”—*Dr. Potter: Handbook for Readers*, pp. 16, 17, 19.

“*Reading, to be useful, should be combined with reflection*. Books can afford but little improvement to those who do not *think as well as read*. . . . Thus we see the great necessity of reading with deliberation; and may I not add, that in this respect, *laboring people*, and those whose pursuits give to them almost constant engagement, *have advantages which they are not apt to appreciate*. By reading at intervals, some portion of a good book, and then carrying the matter with them to their places of business, as a subject for thought and conversation, they will soon discover that the subject grows upon them in interest, that their views insensibly become clearer and more enlarged, and that useful reflections, not suggested by the author, rise before their minds. And thus it is, *that men of active pursuits are more apt, as all expe*

*rience testifies, to accumulate useful knowledge, than those whose lives are passed in leisure and in the midst of books. . . . Let me advise, then, that books be read deliberately.* The old maxim, that 'if a thing be worth doing at all, it is worth doing well,' is peculiarly applicable to reading. A book run over hastily, is rarely understood; if not understood, it is not remembered; and if not remembered, the time spent in reading it is lost. . . . By deep and diligent meditation, we (should) acquire something which may truly be called our own; for, as Milton says:—who reads

'Incessantly, and to his reading brings not  
A spirit and judgment equal or superior.  
Uncertain and unsettled still remains,  
Deep versed in books, but shallow in himself.' "

*Dr. Potter: Advantages of Science, pp. 17, 18, 27, 30.*

### 8. SOCIAL OR CLASS READING.

'If three or four persons agree to read the same book, and each brings his own remarks upon it, at some set hours appointed for conversation, and they communicate, mutually, their sentiments on the subjects, and debate about it in a friendly manner, the practice will render the reading of any author more abundantly beneficial to every one of them. . . . If several persons engaged in the same study, take into their hands distinct treatises on one subject, and appoint a season of communication once a week, they may inform each other in a brief manner, concerning the sense, sentiments and method of those several authors, and thereby promote each other's improvement, &c. . . . Talking over the things which you have read to your companions, on the first proper opportunity, is a most useful manner of review or repetition, in order to fix them upon the mind. Teach them to your younger friends, in order to establish your own knowledge, while you communicate it to them.'—*Dr. Watts on the Mind, pp. 60, 61, 178.*

"'Company and conversation,' says Feltham, 'are the best instructors for a noble nature.' 'An engagement and combating of wits,' says Erasmus, 'does, in an extraordinary manner, both show the strength of geniuses, rouses them and augments them. If you are in doubt of any thing, do not be ashamed to ask, or, if you have committed an error, be corrected.'—*Dr. Potter: Handbook for Readers, p. 19.*

"Some books should be read in company with others, especially with our family. We never relish a good book so highly as when we read it with a friend of congenial tastes. . . . And in this plan of social reading, what friends so proper as those of our household! What employment more appropriate for the domestic circle, than one which causes the minds of all to move in unison, thus strengthening the ties of mutual affection, and causing us to associate with home, the remembrance of our intellectual pleasures! . . . It will not be easy to preserve the good old practice of collecting our families around the cheerful fire, and teaching them to relish early the home-bred delights of affection, and of a common intercourse with those best and most improving visiters, good books." *Dr. Potter: Advantages of Science, pp. 27, 29.*

### 9. RE-READING OR REVIEWING.

"A frequent review and careful repetition of the things we would learn, and an abridgment of them in a narrow compass, has a great influence to fix them in the memory. . . . Repetition is so very useful a practice, that Winemon, even from his youth to his old age, never read a book without making some small points, dashes, or hooks in the margin, to mark what parts of the discourse were proper for review; and when he came to the end of a section or chapter, he always shut his book, and recollected all the sentiments or expres-

sions he had marked, so that he could give a tolerable analysis and abstract of every treatise he had read, just after he had finished it. Hence he became so well furnished with a rich variety of knowledge."—*Dr. Watts on the Mind*, p. 177.

"Strive, by frequent reviews, to keep your knowledge *always at command*. 'What booteth,' says an old writer, 'to read much, which is a weariness to the flesh; to meditate often, which is a burden to the mind; to learn daily, with increase of knowledge, when he is *to seek* for what he *hath* learned, and perhaps *then*, especially, when he hath most need thereof? Without this, (reviewing) our studies are but lost labor.'"—*Dr. Potter: Handbook for Readers*, p. 20.

"I would recommend, that when we become acquainted with a truly good book, we *read it often*. Cecil tells us that he had a '*shelf for tried books*; books, which he could never open without being incited to reflection, and enriched by some new hint or principle. It should be so with all of us. *A few books properly selected and faithfully read, would suffice to yield us more, both of pleasure and profit, than any number, however great, taken at random, and read, as they usually are, in a hurried and unreflecting manner.* A book, moreover, which deserves the praise of being good, has cost its author efforts which cannot be appreciated at a single reading."—*Dr. Potter: Advantages of Science*, p. 29.

#### 10. READING CONNECTED WITH WRITING.

"For want of retiring and writing, many a learned man has lost several useful meditations of his own, and could never recall them. . . . If a book has no index nor good table of contents, it is very useful to make one as you are reading it. . . . It is sufficient in your index, to take notice only of those parts of the book which are new to you, or which you think well written, and well worthy of your remembrance or review. Shall I be so free as to assure my younger friends, from my own experience, that these methods of reading will cost some pains in the first years of your study, and especially in the first authors, which you peruse in any science, or on any particular subject; but the profit will richly compensate the pains. And in the following years of life, after you have read a few valuable books on any special subject in this manner, it will be very easy to read others of the same kind; because you will not usually find very much new matter in them, which you have not already examined. If the writer be remarkable for any peculiar excellencies or defects in his style or manner of writing, make just observations upon this also; and whatever ornaments you find there, or whatever blemishes occur in the language or manner of the writer, you may make just remarks upon them. And remember, that one book, read over in this manner, with all this laborious meditation, will tend more to enrich your understanding, than skimming over the surface of twenty. . . . It is useful *to note down matters of doubt and inquiry*, and take the first opportunity to get them resolved either by persons or books. . . . Lawyers and Divines write down short notes or hints of the principal heads of what they desire to commit to memory, in order to preach or plead. . . . The art of *short hand* is of excellent use for this, as well as other purposes. . . . Those who scarcely ever take a pen in their hands to write short notes or hints of what they are to learn, need a double degree of power to *retain* or recollect what they read or hear."—*Dr. Watts on the Mind*, pp. 42, 64, 65, 72, 178.

"Nor is it merely to the philosopher, who wishes to distinguish himself by his discoveries, that *writing affords an useful instrument of study*. Important assistance may be derived from it by all those who wish to impress on their minds the investigations which occur to them *in the course of their reading*."—*Dugald Stuart: Philos. of the Mind*, Vol. 1, p. 332.

"Seek opportunities to *write and converse* on subjects about which you

read. '*Reading*,' says Bacon, 'maketh a *full man, conference, a ready man, and writing, an exact man.*'"—*Dr. Potter: Hand Book, &c., p. 19.*

"I add one more suggestion in the words of another. Young persons especially, will pardon the suggestion, that *in no way*, perhaps, can their store of applicable knowledge be more certainly, though at first almost imperceptibly, increased, than *by habitually reading with a pen in the hand.* There is much good sense in these doggerel verses, for which we are indebted to no ordinary thinker."

"In reading authors, when you find  
Bright passages that strike your mind,  
And which, perhaps, you may have reason  
To think on at another season,  
Be not contented with the sight,  
*But take them down in black and white;*  
Such a respect is wisely shown,  
As makes *another's sense one's own.*"

*Dr. Potter: Advantages of Science, p. 30.*

## 11. METHOD OF READING—GENERAL HINTS AND DIRECTIONS.

"*Books of importance* of any kind, and especially *complete treatises* on any subject, should be *first* read in a *more general* and cursory manner, to learn a little what the treatise promises, and what you may expect from the writer's manner and skill. And for this end, I would advise always, that *the preface be read*, and a survey taken of the *table of contents*, if there be one, *before* this first survey of the book. By this means, you will not only be better fitted to give the book the first reading, but you will be much assisted in your second perusal, *which should be done with greater attention and deliberation;* and you will learn with more ease and readiness what the author pretends to teach. In your reading, mark what is new or unknown to you before; and review those chapters, pages, or paragraphs. . . . Other things, also, of the like nature may be usefully practiced with regard to the authors which you read. If *the method of a book be irregular*, reduce it into form by a *little analysis of your own*, or by *hints in the margin;* if those things are *heaped together* which should be separated, you may *wisely distinguish* and divide them. If several things relating to the same subject are *scattered up and down separately* through the treatise, you may bring them all *to one view, by references;* or if the *matter* of a book be really valuable and deserving, you may throw it into a better *method*, reduce it to a more logical scheme, or abridge it into a lesser form. All these practices will have a tendency both to advance your skill in logic and method, to improve your judgment in general, and to give you a fuller survey of that subject in particular. When you have finished the treatise, with all your observations upon it, recollect and determine what real improvements you have made by reading that author. . . . Endeavor to apply every speculative study, as far as possible, to *some practical use, that both yourself and others may be the better for it.*"—*Dr. Watts, pp. 59, 64, 139.*

"Always have some useful and pleasant book ready to take up in 'odd ends' of time. A good part of life will otherwise be wasted. 'There is,' says Wytttenbach, 'no business, no avocation whatever, which will not permit a man who has *an inclination* to give a little time every day to the studies of his youth. . . . Be not alarmed because *so many* books are recommended. They are not all to be read at once, nor in a short time. '*Some travelers,*' says Bishop Hall, '*have more shrunk at the map than at the way;* between both, how many stand still with their arms folded.' . . . Do not attempt to *read much or fast.* 'To call him *well read*, who reads *many authors,*' says Shaftsbury, 'is improper.' 'It does not matter,' says Seneca, '*how many, but how good books* you have.' . . . Endeavor to find opportunities to *use your knowledge*, and apply it in practice. 'They proceed right well in all know-

ledge,' says Bacon, 'which do *couple* study with their practice, and do not first study altogether, and then practice altogether.'—*Dr. Potter: Hand Book, &c.*, pp. 16, 20.

"HOW SHOULD WE READ? First, thoughtfully and critically; secondly, in company with a friend or with our family; thirdly, repeatedly; fourthly, with pen in hand."—*Dr. Potter: Advantages of Science*, p. 31.

## 12. EFFECTS OF BOOKS—INFLUENCE OF AUTHORS.

"Wherefore should not the literary character be associated in utility or glory with the other professional classes of society? . . . . The commercial prosperity of a nation inspires no renovation in mankind; nor will its military power with their affection. There is an interchange of opinions, as well as of spices and specie, which induces nations to esteem each other; and there is a glorious succession of authors, as well as of seamen and soldiers, forever standing before the eyes of the universe. It is by our authors that foreigners have been taught to subdue their own prejudices. . . . . The small cities of Athens and of Florence will perpetually attest the influence of the literary character over other nations; the one received the tributes of the mistress of the universe, when the Romans sent their youth to be educated at Athens; while the other, at the revival of letters, beheld every polished European crowding to its little court. . . . . Those who govern a nation, cannot at the same time enlighten them;—authors stand between the governors and the governed. . . . . The single thought of a man of genius has sometimes changed the dispositions of a people, and even of an age. . . . . When Locke and Montesquieu appeared, the old systems of government were reviewed; the principles of legislation were developed; and many changes have succeeded, and are still to succeed. . . . . Observe the influence of authors in forming the character of men, where the solitary man of genius stamps his own on a people. The habits, the precepts, &c., of Dr. Franklin imprinted themselves on his Americans; while the elegant tastes of Sir William Jones could inspire the servants of a commercial corporation to open new and vast sources of knowledge. . . . . While Britain retains her awful situation among the nations of Europe, the 'Sylva' of Evelyn will endure with her triumphant oaks. In the third edition of that work, the heart of the patriot exults at its results. He tells Charles I. 'how many millions of timber trees, besides requisite others, have been propagated and planted at the *instigation, and by the sole direction of this work*. It was an author in his studious retreat, who, casting a prophetic eye on the age we live in, secured the late victories of our naval sovereignty. Inquire at the Admiralty how the fleets of Nelson have been constructed, and they can tell you that it was with the oaks which the genius of Evelyn planted. . . . . The same character existed in France, where De Leres, in 1599, composed a work on the cultivation of mulberry trees, in reference to the art of raising silk-worms. He taught his fellow-citizens to convert a leaf into silk, and silk to become the representative of gold. . . . . A work in France, under the title of 'L'Ami des Hommes,' first spread there a general passion for agricultural pursuits; and although the national ardor carried all to excess, yet marshes were drained, and waste lands inclosed. . . . The commercial world owes to two retired philosophers, in the solitude of their study, Locke and Smith, those principles which dignify trade into a liberal pursuit, and connect it with the happiness of a people. . . . In the history of genius, there is no chronology, for to us everything it has done is present; and the earliest attempt is connected with the most recent. . . . . My learned and reflecting friend, (Sharon Turner, Esq.,) whose original researches have enriched our national history, has thus observed on the character of Wickliffe:—'To complete our idea of the importance of Wickliffe, it is only necessary to add, that as his writings made John Huss the Reformer of Bohemia, so the



writings of John Huss led Martin Luther to be the Reformer of Germany; so extensive and so incalculable are the consequences which sometimes follow from human actions.' Our historian has accompanied this, by giving the very feelings of Luther in early life on his first perusal of the works of John Huss; we see the spark of creation caught at the moment; a striking influence of the generation of character! Thus a father-spirit has many sons. . . . Such are the 'great lights of the world,' by whom the torch of knowledge has been successively seized, and transmitted from one to the other. . . . The torch of genius is perpetually transferred from hand to hand amidst this fleeting scene."

*D'Israeli's Literary Character, &c. ; Alexandrian edition, pp. 444, 446.*

### 13. EARLY READING—FIRST STUDIES.

The serious caution and conscientious watchfulness to be exercised by parents and friends, in the selection of books for the young, and for those who have not been accustomed to reading, (on the minds of both which classes, vivid and permanent, and therefore most important impressions will necessarily be produced by the authors recommended,) are forcibly suggested by the illustrations which follow. The practical teachings of these examples make it proper that they should have the place of emphasis and chief effect, at the close of our collations.

"The first studies form an epoch in the history of genius, and unquestionably have sensibly influenced its productions. Often have the first impressions stamped a character on the mind adapted to receive one, as often the first step into life has determined its walk. . . . An early attachment to the works of Sir Thomas Browne produced in Johnson an excessive admiration of that Latinized English, which violated the native graces of the language. The first studies of Rembrandt affected his after labors; that peculiarity of shadow which marks all his pictures, originated in the circumstance of his father's mill receiving light from an aperture at the top, which habituated that artist afterwards to view all objects as if seen in that magical light. When Pope was a child, he found in his mother's closet a small library of mystical devotion; but it was not suspected till the fact was discovered, that the effusions of love and religion poured forth in his *Eloisa*, were derived from the seraphic raptures of those erotic mystics, who to the last retained a place in his library among the classical bards of antiquity. The accidental perusal of Quintus Curtius first made Boyle 'in love with other than pedantic books, and conjured up in him,' as he expresses it, 'an unsatisfied appetite of knowledge; so that he thought he owed more to Quintus Curtius than did Alexander.' From the perusal of Rycaut's folio of Turkish history in childhood, the noble and impassioned bard of our times, (Lord Byron,) retained those indelible impressions which gave life and motion to the '*Giaour*, the *Corsair* and *Alp*.' A voyage to the country produced the scenery. . . . The influence of first studies, in the formation of the character of genius, is a moral phenomenon, which has not sufficiently attracted our notice. Dr. Franklin acquaints us that when young and wanting books, he accidentally found De Foe's '*Essay on Projects*,' from which work impressions were derived which afterwards influenced some of the principal events of his life. . . . Such is the influence through life of those first unobserved impressions on the character of genius, which every author has not recorded." Such, too, in a greater or less degree, is the influence of first impressions on all minds. As the impressions can never be obliterated, the influence is to last forever.—See *D'Israeli's Literary Character, &c. ; Alexandrian edition, p. 412.*

### 14. HINTS TO YOUNG LADIES AS TO WHAT TO READ AND HOW TO READ.

"THINK, my dear young friends, of the difference that is made in the character of a human being, simply by reading. Compare an Irish girl

who comes to this country at fifteen or sixteen, who has never been taught to read, with one of your own countrywomen in the humblest condition, of the same age, who *loves to read*, and who has read the books within her reach! . . . . Books are the best property of the rich; think what they are to the poor who *really love them*. Compare the pampered boy, who cares for nothing so much as the indulgence of his sensual appetites, fretting over a table spread luxuriously, to a little fellow who, coming from the district-school, with his empty luncheon basket, snatches his Robinson Crusoe from the shelf; and, while his half frozen toes are warming, devours it, forgetful of every evil in life. . . . It was but yesterday that I was at the humble home of a revolutionary soldier—a pensioner. I found his wife reading. Her eight children are dispersed south and west, and the old pair are left alone. They live far away from the village, and hardly put their heads out of doors from November till March. I involuntarily expressed my sympathy in their solitary condition. ‘Oh,’ replied the old lady most cheerily, ‘I have company—*books*, the best of company!’ . . . . Think over your acquaintance, my young friends; I am sure you will find among them some old person, some invalid, some one cut off from social pleasures, to whom life would be a tedious burden, if it were not for books. . . . If there is a real love of books, there is hardly a limit to be set to the knowledge that may be acquired from them without the aid of instructors, schools, or colleges. . . . A love for reading is with some merely the keen appetite of a superior mind. It would be felt under any circumstances whatever. But these are the few—the gifted. With most persons, the taste for reading must be cultivated. I believe there is no habit easier to form. Intelligent children, who live in reading families, with very few exceptions, are fond of reading as soon as they can read with facility. . . . But, if you have been so unfortunate as not to acquire this habit of reading early, form it now for yourself. If you are not capable of selecting your own books, take the advice of some friend who knows the wants of your mind. Resolve to devote a portion of every day, for a year to come, to reading; and then, if you forget your resolution, it will not signify. The love of reading will, by that time, surely take the place of the duty, and do your mind vastly more good.

“It is difficult to give any general advice as to the selection of books, because so much depends on the character, opportunities, and leisure of the individual. . . . It would be too painful for me to believe that there is one among you, to whom it is necessary to say, ‘Regard the bible as the first and best of books.’ But I fear, my young friends, that you read the bible much less than you should. The multitude of religious books and tracts have, in some measure, superseded it. You are attracted by a story, and, to get a little pure gold you receive a great deal of dross. Many of these books, I know, derive their spirit from the bible; many of them are useful and delightful; but let them take a subordinate place, and not encroach on the time you have to give to the reading of the bible. Do not be satisfied to drink from the stream which is imbued with much earthy material, when you can go to the pure fountain. . . . You will find your pleasure in reading the bible incalculably increased, if you will read it not only with a spirit submissive to its Divine instruction, but with your mind awakened, and eager to understand it. There are Dictionaries of the Bible that explain what is obscure; there are books that will give you much light upon the history, customs, and modes of life among the Jews. There are others that explain the prophecies, and show you their fulfillment. . . . If you can read but few books, be sure that the history of your own country is among them. Make yourself acquainted thoroughly with its institutions, its past and present condition, its extent, climate, laws, productions, and commerce. All these subjects come within our own sphere—they may be called domestic matters. Think you, if a woman was well instructed, well *read* on these topics, she would be as incapable of business, and therefore as dependent as she now is? . . . . Next to the history and condition of your

own country, it is important that you acquaint yourselves with the history and condition of the countries whence your ancestors came. Then you will be able to compare your country with other countries, your own times with preceding ages. Thus informed, you will not fall into the common national vanity of fancying all knowledge, all virtue, and all progress, concentrated in the United States; nor into a worse error, a culpable ignorance of the advantages of your own country, and insensibility to them. . . . You will find well written and authentic travels a very improving and delightful kind of reading. You may lack money and opportunity to travel twenty miles from home, when for one or two dollars you may buy a book that will take you, with a well-instructed and all-observing companion, half over the world. Or, if you cannot expend the cost of the book, you may get it from a society, or district-library; or, borrow it from some kindly disposed person. . . . Good biographies are very improving books. The experience of others will often suggest models, advice, and reproof, that comes in the most inoffensive form. . . . Every well educated young person who has leisure for reading, should be well versed in English literature. . . . In the wide department of fictitious writing, let your consciences restrain and direct your inclination, and rectify your taste. . . . When our Saviour employed fiction in the parables of the prodigal son, and of the good Samaritan, it was, no doubt, to give to an important truth, a form that should be universally interesting and touching. Few will object to your reading such fictitious writings as do good to your hearts; and while you have such as Sir Walter Scott's, and Miss Edgeworth's, you have no excuse for reading the profligate and romantic novels of the last century, or the no less profligate and far more insidious romances of the present day.

"Next to 'what to read,' comes the great question 'how to read,' and I am not sure the last is not the weightier of the two. . . . No book will improve you which does not make you think; which does not make your own mind work. This is as certain as that the mill is not improved by the corn that passes through it, or that the purse is none the richer for the money that has been in it. . . . When you read, do not *take for granted*, believing, with ignorant credulity, whatever you see stated in a book. Remember an author is but one witness, and often a very fallible one. Pause in your reading, reflect, compare what the writer tells you with what you have learned from other sources on the subject, and, above all, use your own judgment independently, not presumptuously. . . . Knowing how short and precious time is, be more careful in the selection of your books than eager to read a great many. When you do read, read thoroughly and understandingly. . . . It is a good practice to talk about a book you have just read; not to display your knowledge, for this is pedantry or something worse; but to make your reading a social blessing by communicating liberally to those in your family circle, who may have less time and opportunity for reading than you have. You may often, too, by the superior knowledge of a friend, correct the false impressions you have received. Or, your friend may have read the same book, and then it is a delightful point of sympathy. . . . One word before I close this subject, as to the preservation of your books. If you love them, you will respect them, and unless you are incorrigibly slovenly and careless, you will not break off the covers, soil the leaves, and dog-ear the corners. . . . There is a common and offensive habit destructive to books, which we should not presume to caution any *educating* little girl against, if we had not seen it practiced by *educated* men. This is wetting the fingers to turn over the leaves. . . . Surely this should not be. When you borrow a book, put a cover on it before you read it. Use it with clean hands. Never lay it down on the face, nor where it is exposed to be knocked down by the next passer-by. Do not readily yield to any one's request to lend it again, but return it promptly and punctually. Perform the borrower's duty strictly, and Heaven bless you with liberal lenders."—Miss C. M. Sedgwick: *Means and Ends*.

## PLAN OF READING RECOMMENDED BY THOMAS S. GRIMKE.

1. Before I commenced an author, I made myself thoroughly master of *the whole scheme of his work*, (if a table of contents and chapters enabled me to do so,) of the character of his whole system, of the *principles* on which he had separated and arranged the parts, and of their relation to each other, and to the whole. 2. I then studied the author in the following manner. After reading the first sentence, I meditated on it, developing the author's thought, as well as I was able; and reducing the whole, as nearly as possible, to a single, distinct, concise expression. I then read the second sentence, and did the same: and next compared the two sentences together, meditating on them, and gathering out of them their substance. Thus I went through the paragraph, and then reflected on the whole, until I had reduced it to a single sentence, containing its essence. I then studied the next paragraph in like manner: and having finished it, I compared the two together, and gathered out of them their substance. The same plan was followed in the comparison of sections with sections, chapters with chapters, books with books, until the author was finished. This may appear, at first sight, an exceedingly tedious process; but any one, acquainted with the nature of the mind, knows the wonderful facility that would soon be acquired by a faithful, patient adherence to this mode of study, even through a single chapter. 3. A third rule was to pass nothing unexamined, nothing without reflection, whether in poetry or fiction, history or travels, politics, philosophy, or religion. Gratitude will not allow me to pass unnoticed the vast advantages derived from a humble, patient, thankful perusal of Watts' admirable book on the Improvement of the Mind. Nor ought I to omit the three rules of Professor Whitaker, of Cambridge, given to John Boyse, one of the eminent translators of the Bible in the time of James the 1st, to study chiefly standing or walking, never to study at a window, and not to go to bed, on any account, with cold feet.

It is an error to suppose that a course of study is confined to the period of *youth*, and that when a young man has left school or college, he has finished his education, and has nothing to study but his profession. In truth he has done little more than treasure up some of the important materials, and acquire the elementary habits and discipline, which are indispensable to the continued improvement of his mind. If he expects to be a scholar, not in the *literary* sense of the word, but in a far higher and nobler sense, as a Christian, patriot, philanthropist, and public servant, in the state or national councils, in literary, benevolent, and religious institutions; if he means to be distinguished for his sense of duty, and his spirit of usefulness, for just principles, enlarged views, dignified sentiments and liberal feelings, for sound thinking, and clear, close reasoning, let him be assured that he has done little more than lay the foundations, in the school, or even in the college, up to the age of twenty. He must make up his mind to be a devoted student, in spite of his professional engagements, for ten years at least; until he shall have been able to deepen and strengthen, and enlarge, and elevate his mind, so as to fit himself for solid, honorable, permanent usefulness. Let him remember, that the *school* only prepares the *youth* to enter on the course of study, appropriate to the *young man*: and that the *college* only enables the *young man* to enter on the course of study appropriate to the *man*. Manhood has its appropriate course of study, and the difference between men arises very much from their selection and pursuit of a right course of study. Many fine minds, capable of enlarged and durable improvement and usefulness, are lost every year to the community, in which their lot is cast, to the country they are bound to serve, to the cause of religion, humanity, justice and literature: because they have failed in this great duty, they have neglected the course of study, appropriate to manhood. And here let it be remarked, that the *true* student never considers how much he reads, but rather how *little*, and only *what* and *how* he reads.—*Grimke on Science, Education, and Literature*, p.p. 54-56.



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